

Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

Part 85 – Zophar Charges That Job is Wicked Through Job’s Answer (Job 20-21)

1. What caused Zophar to answer Job?

“(1) Then answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said, (2) Therefore do **my thoughts cause me to answer**, and for this I make haste” (Job 20:1-2).

NKJV says “anxious thoughts”.

2. What standard (truth or the understanding of a man) will Zophar use to answer Job?

“(3) I have heard the check of my reproach, and **the spirit of my understanding** causeth me to answer” (Job 20:3).

If one’s understanding is based in the Scriptures (Ephesians 5:17), that is good (Psalms 119:99-100; 130 and Proverbs 28:5).

Leaning on your own understanding is not good (Proverbs 3:5).

3. What charge is implied against Job as you read Job 20:4-5?

It is implied that Job is a wicked hypocrite who triumphed briefly: “(4) Knowest thou not this of old, since man was placed upon earth, (5) **That the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment**” (Job 20:4-5)?

4. According to Zophar, does the wicked hypocrite that perishes leave behind an unforgettable legacy?

No: “(6) Though his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the clouds; (7) **Yet he shall perish for ever like his own dung**: they which have seen him shall say, Where is he? (8) He shall fly away as a dream, and shall not be found: yea, he shall be chased away as a vision of the night. (9) The eye also which saw him shall see him no more; **neither shall his place any more behold him**” (Job 20:6-9).

5. Will the children of the wicked hypocrite, who are left behind after he dies, have to serve the poor?

Yes: “His children shall seek to please the poor, and his hands shall restore their goods” (Job 20:10).

NKJV says: “His children will seek the favor of the poor, And his hands will restore his wealth.”

The point is, his children will become so low that they will beg from the poor. Truly, it is sad how the next generation often has to suffer the consequences of idiocy from their parents. Sometimes those consequences came from the Lord (Exodus 20:3-5).

6. What would a typical Jehovah’s Witness teach by perverting Job 20:11 and why would they be wrong?

They have used the passage to teach that death ends the life of one’s soul as man does not live beyond the grave if he has sinned, even for eternity. The verse says: “(11) His bones are full of the sin of his youth, which shall lie down with him in the dust” (Job 20:11).

Their NWT says: “His own bones have been full of his youthful vigor, But with him it will lie down in mere dust”.

The true idea, and a common phrase today can be used in displaying the idea of this passage, is he [the wicked hypocrite] will take these things to his grave.

We know that live does not cease at the point of death (**Matthew 22:31-32, Luke 16:19-31, and Luke 23:43**; cf. **Acts 2:22ff.**).

7. What is the meaning of the argument that is set forth in Job 20:12-15?

The idea that sin may taste good, but it sure is bitter (**Proverbs 20:17**) and will cause you to vomit: “(12) Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth, though he hide it under his tongue; (13) Though he spare it, and forsake it not; but keep it still within his mouth: (14) Yet his meat in his bowels is turned, it is the gall of asps within him. (15) He hath swallowed down riches, and he shall vomit them up again: God shall cast them out of his belly” (**Job 20:12-15**).

Remember, the pleasures of sin are temporary (**Hebrews 11:24-25**).

This is a hard charge based on what Job said earlier: “(17) For he breaketh me with a tempest, and multiplieth my wounds without cause. (18) He will not suffer me to take my breath, but filleth me with bitterness” (**Job 9:17-18**).

8. What consequences does Zophar say will take place for oppressing and forsaking the poor?

“(19) Because he hath oppressed and hath forsaken the poor; because he hath violently taken away an house which he builded not; (20) Surely he shall not feel quietness in his belly, he shall not save of that which he desired. (21) There shall none of his meat be left; therefore shall no man look for his goods. (22) In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits: every hand of the wicked shall come upon him. (23) When he is about to fill his belly, God shall cast the fury of his wrath upon him, and shall rain it upon him while he is eating” (**Job 20:19-23**).

The truth is, at one point or another, you do reap what you sow (**Galatians 6:7-8**). The wicked, though such is not accurate of what Job was (**Job 1:1**), do often cause the poor to suffer (**Psalms 10:2-4**).

9. Does Zophar say that the wicked will be able to flee from physical danger?

No: “(24) He shall flee from the iron weapon, and the bow of steel shall strike him through. (25) It is drawn, and cometh out of the body; yea, the glittering sword cometh out of his gall: terrors are upon him” (**Job 20:24-25**).

10. Is Zophar painting a pretty picture for the end of the wicked man’s life?

No: “(26) All darkness shall be hid in his secret places: a fire not blown shall consume him; it shall go ill with him that is left in his tabernacle [home]. (27) The heaven shall reveal his iniquity; and the earth shall rise up against him. (28) The increase of his house shall depart, and his goods shall flow away in the day of his wrath. (29) This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed unto him by God” (**Job 20:26-29**).

Similar statements are made for the end of false teachers (**Jude 13**).

11. From the first three verses of chapter twenty-one, what attitude is Job displaying?

“(1) But Job answered and said, (2) Hear diligently my speech, and let this be your consolations. (3) Suffer me that I may speak; and after that I have spoken, mock on” (Job 21:1-3).

Job has a listen to me carefully, I’ll shut up then, and you can continue your mocking of me statement, which shows his attitude is one of despair and frustration.

12. Is Job’s complaint only with men or does he also imply a complaint with God?

Both: *“As for me, is my complaint to man? and if it were so, why should not my spirit be troubled” (Job 21:4)?*

13. Does Job realize that when people compare what he once was with what has happened to him now that they are astonished?

Yes: *“Mark me, and be astonished, and lay your hand upon your mouth” (Job 21:5).*

14. How does Job consider the memory of himself?

Poorly: *“Even when I remember I am afraid, and trembling taketh hold on my flesh” (Job 21:6).*

15. How does Job begin to counter the implications that he is wicked because he’s suffering?

By showing that the wicked often do better than he: *“Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power” (Job 21:7)?*

16. Has Job’s family been established (answer from chapters 1-2)?

For the most part, his family has been destroyed (**Job 1:18-19; 2:9-10**).

17. Does Job argue that the families of the wicked are established?

Yes: *“Their seed is established in their sight with them, and their offspring before their eyes” (Job 21:8).*

This argument is to say, see I am not wicked look at how the families of the wicked do well when mine has not.

18. What is the point Job is arguing in his defense based upon his words in Job 21:9-13?

Job has lost his house, his herds, his family, and his wealth. Job is saying the wicked keep these things, I have lost them. See that shows I am not wicked: *“(9) Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them. (10) Their bull gendereth, and faileth not; their cow calveth, and casteth not her calf. (11) They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance. (12) They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ. (13) They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave” (Job 21:9-13).*

The truth is, the wicked do not always prosper (**Psalms 11:5-6, Psalms 37:28; 38**, and **Proverbs 12:7**) and the righteous do not always suffer (**Proverbs 11:31; 15:6**). Yes, we know the righteous often suffer persecution (**Matthew 5:10-12**), but that is not ALWAYS the case (i.e. Abraham, Solomon before he sinned, etc.). The righteous will have our needs met (**Psalms 34:9-10, Psalms 37:3, Romans 8:31-39**, and **Hebrews 13:5-6**).

19. When the wicked prosper, do they often reject God as Job argues (Job 21:14-15)?

Yes: **Proverbs 30:9**, **Malachi 3:13-15**, and **Revelation 3:14-19**. They feel that God cannot do anything (**Psalms 10:13**).

20. Does Job allow his arguments to show punishment at all for the wicked?

Yes, by God in wrath implied as eternal destruction (cf. vs. 30-33): “(16) *Lo, their good is not in their hand: the counsel of the wicked is far from me. (17) How oft is the candle of the wicked put out! and how oft cometh their destruction upon them! God distributeth sorrows in his anger. (18) They are as stubble before the wind, and as chaff that the storm carrieth away. (19) God layeth up his iniquity for his children: he rewardeth him, and he shall know it. (20) His eyes shall see his destruction, and he shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty. (21) For what pleasure hath he in his house after him, when the number of his months is cut off in the midst*” (**Job 21:16-21**)?

21. Does Job claim to understand how God chooses to judge the wicked?

No, he says the opposite: “(22) *Shall any teach God knowledge? seeing he judgeth those that are high. (23) One dieth in his full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet. (24) His breasts are full of milk, and his bones are moistened with marrow. (25) And another dieth in the bitterness of his soul, and never eateth with pleasure. (26) They shall lie down alike in the dust, and the worms shall cover them*” (**Job 21:22-26**).

Job is right, we cannot “figure out” God completely (**Isaiah 55:6-9** and **Romans 11:33-36**).

22. Does Job see that the arguments about the wicked by his friends are really charges against him?

Yes: “(27) *Behold, I know your thoughts, and the devices which ye wrongfully imagine against me. (28) For ye say, Where is the house of the prince? and where are the dwelling places of the wicked*” (**Job 21:27-28**)?

23. What does Job want his friends to realize about the end of the wicked?

The judgment of the wicked is reserved until destruction: “(29) *Have ye not asked them that go by the way? and do ye not know their tokens, (30) That the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction? they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath. (31) Who shall declare his way to his face? and who shall repay him what he hath done? (32) Yet shall he be brought to the grave, and shall remain in the tomb. (33) The clods of the valley shall be sweet unto him, and every man shall draw after him, as there are innumerable before him*” (**Job 21:29-33**).

24. Does Job believe his friends are accurate in their charges against him?

No: “*How then comfort ye me in vain, seeing in your answers there remaineth falsehood*” (**Job 21:34**)?